

Knighthood in the Modern Amtgard Era

Amtgard is growing and changing, a microcausm of a society stressed by internal and external forces. A new balance is to be found, and everything, including that which we hold most dear, is subject to scrutiny. An area of special relevance is the subject of knighthood. An influx of new members in the parent kingdom shifts the balance, making good fighters seem like great fighters in the sea of untrained "newbees". The new Amtgard groups grapple with the need to establish their own standards without losing contact with the traditions established and nurtured in the Burning Lands. With improved services, new groups, expanding membership, recent legal achievements, etc., there are increased expectations. More people want on the bandwagon now that Amtgard is obviously going somewhere. Ideologies clash as the rebels of yesterday become the guardians of the spirit and hopes of the past. A prime area of contention would naturally be awards, especially titles such as lordship and peerage. Much has been written on the subject, and much of that by myself. Using the available facts and figures, I will endeavor to point out just when a person qualifies for a title.

Corpora lists criteria for all awards, but the fact is there is little continuity between the decisions of monarchs in different reigns, and more often than not the monarch is ignorant of much of the corpora. The expansion of Amtgard into other cities amplifies this problem by several degrees, with future growth promising more headaches. So when is a knight really a knight? Let us dissect the available data. The Burning Lands has belted 26 members in 6 years of existence. This averages out to 2 per monarch's reign, which is about twice what I consider the ideal rate. However, these knights only represent less than 4 percent of total participants from the day 1, so the figure is not unduly high. One knight out of every 25 persons is a fair number. Belted members are listed by the following format: name, date joined, months to make lord/months to earn first belt, belt type.

Andralaine	6/83	--/16	flame	Johann	9/84	--/20	sword
Aramithris	4/84	7/13	flame	Kalibria	4/83	19/25	flame
Aredhel	4/84	--/24	sword	Larce	9/85	--/25	sword
Ariona	3/85	10/24	serpent	M'Deth	4/84	--/13	sword
Charloc	7/83	--/20	flame	Morluk	4/83	--/08	sword
Conan	7/83	--/08	flame	Nashomi	3/83	--/07	flame
Deth	5/83	--/14	sword	Nithanalorn	11/86	10/17	serpent
Esuom	9/84	10/08	serpent	Rift	7/84	12/15	sword
Gwynne	8/84	26/31	serpent	Ryah	7/85	11/15	flame
Gilos	4/83	--/06	crown	Tawnee	2/83	--/02	crown
Heimdale	6/83	--/10	crown	Thanos	3/83	--/07	flame
Hellspawn	10/84	9/12	flame	Theo	5/83	26/35	flame
Joella	2/83	--/02	crown	Zyax	2/85	--/17	sword

One thing that jumps out at you is the early dates: 18 of the 26 received their first belt during Amtgard's prehistoric era from 1983-85. The reasons are twofold: 1) prominent society members tend to excel in more than one field (ten members have two or more belts), and recent belts have often been awarded to people whom are already knights, 2) as with any birth, the early years of Amtgard were painful, with political, social, and other forces constantly altering the perception of and the criteria for knights. We are more stable in the modern era; and it is true that many of the older knights could not qualify under today's standards. No criticism is implied. Our population explosion provides a larger pool of talent and abilities. Also, current fighters and artisans are more sophisticated than their original counterparts. The competition is much tougher. Only 1 of the 26 joined Amtgard within the last 3 years-- a prospective knight must brace for the long haul. It takes a knight an average of 15 months to earn his first belt, though that figure is somewhat misleading.

Four knights were first belted as "crowns", and two each of the "flames" and "swords" were knighted under the now discontinued practice of knighting the Champion along with the monarch. It takes a crown knight 6 more months these days, as he is knighted at the end rather than at the start of a term. Eliminate all these "automatic" knightings and the numbers come down to 1½ new knights per reign, and an average of 20 months to receive the first belt. Clearly those are more reasonable figures. Analysis yields other interesting tidbits. Only 33% of the knights were formerly squires, yet 67% of all active knights currently have a squire. 73% of the knights still have some connection or involvement with Amtgard (that is more than four times the rate for the general populace). Only 33% of the knights were lorded first, although this percentage rises dramatically when considering the more recent knightings. An appraisal of 25 lords and ladies indicates an average of 18 months to achieve the title. 40% of the lords would later become knights, this an average of 6 months after the lording. On any given day, about 1 in 5 people you see will be wearing a white belt-- knights are a dedicated lot. All knights of the Crown (primarily former monarchs) have earned at least one additional belt. The profile of a "typical" Amtgard knight reads as follows:

Age: 25 Gender: 60% male, 40% female Time in club: 50 months
Time to receive first belt: 20 months

- 85% have their own personal symbol
- 85% have a title of nobility and/or the title of lord
- 80% have qualified at Crown Qualifications
- 80% have organized and/or run an event
- 75% have won at least one cultural and one war event
- 75% have a special award (flame, jovious, etc.)
- 75% have made weapons and garb
- 70% have been either monarch, consort, prime minister, or champion
- 70% have been published at Amtgard
- 70% have been a company captain or sergeant
- 67% have never been a squire
- 65% have either cooked or performed for the populace
- 65% have placed in the top 3 in a competitive test (reeves, heraldry, etc.)
- 60% have earned a non-fighting masterhood
- 55% have advanced past the 1st round in a gaming tourney (chess, go, etc.)

Perhaps they are not Renaissance men, but the cross section of what a knight is yields a more rounded individual than may be commonly believed. Aspiring knighthood candidates would do well to study the percentages. Next we will examine the three types of knighthood that may be awarded by a monarch's discretion in more detail. These areas are serpent, sword, and flame. Each section will include relevant criteria listed in a row at the top of the listing (detailed explanations will be at the head of each section). Active persons in each category will be listed in column in order of number of orders most relevant to that form of knighthood. Persons will be further subdivided into three categories:

- A- knights (or warlords) of that order
- B- persons one step below, usually masters in their own field,
- C- those either rising towards "A" or "B", or whose names are brought up when considering knighthood, or those who themselves feel they should be knights

Any conclusions will follow. The charts that follow should enable people in all Amtgard groups to determine what prerequisites are required to earn a belt.

Knights of the Serpent (arts and sciences)

Key:

- Orders- prerequisites to masterhood and then knighthood ;
- Mstr.- total number of masterhoods achieved in the non-fighting areas
- events- total number of cultural events won (garb, singing, art, etc.)
- A&S- highest placing achieved in the bi-annual Crown Qualifications Arts and Sciences competition
- Areas- areas for which most of the listed awards were received

- A- Knights of the serpent
- B- masters in the arts and sciences
- C- aspirants

	<u>Orders</u>	<u>Mstr.</u>	<u>events</u>	<u>A&S</u>	<u>Areas</u>
A					
Gwynne	33 dragons	4	10	1st	garb, 2-D mediums
Tawnee	30 dragons	4	22	1st	garb, 3-D mediums
Joella	25 dragons	4	17	2nd	garb, embroidery
Ariona	18 dragons	2	4	2nd	garb, cooking
M'Deth	16 owls	1	19	1st	construction
Esuom	12 dragons	1	4	---	3-D mediums
Nithanalorn	10 dragons	1	6	1st	garb, 2-D mediums
B					
Scarhart	11 dragons	2	12	2nd	music, photography
Aramithris	11 dragons	4	22	1st	literature, tests, gaming
Fedora	10 dragons	1	5	---	literature, garb
Shylarra	12 garber	1	3	3rd	garb
C					
Aron	9 dragons	0	2	---	2-D mediums
Nashomi	9 dragons	2	0	---	garb
Ahira	7 garber	0	3	---	garb, gaming
Theo	6 dragons	0	5	2nd	cooking
Kalibria	6 garber	0	3	---	garb, 3-D mediums
Abedon	6 garber	0	0	---	garb

Conclusions- all knights of the serpent are masters in their field and have won multiple cultural events. 84% have placed 1st or 2nd in Crown Qualifications. All make either their own garb or armor. 84% have served as an arts guildmaster. All have placed in garb contests, and 71% have placed in a flat-art category as well. 71% have placed in a writing contest.

Items of interest- when all the cultural contests are boiled down to 9 basic categories, and utilizing a system that awards 3 pts. for a 1st place, 2 for a 2nd, and 1 for a 3rd, then all-time standings per general category are:

Garb:	1- Tawnee/24	2- Esuom/14	3- Gwynne/9
Gaming:	1- Aramithris/20	2- Ahira/16	3- Anneka/7
Tests:	1- Aramithris/29	2- M'Deth/10	3- Tawnee/9
Cooking:	1- Tawnee/17	2- M'Deth/11	3- Joella/9
Performing:	1- Scarhart/36	2- Joella/11	3- Tawnee/9
Combat items:	1- M'Deth/15	2- Aramithris/11	3- Rift/9
3-D mediums:	1- Tawnee/18	2- Esuom/17	3- M'Deth/15
2-D mediums:	1- Gwynne/12	2- Joella/11	3- Tawnee/10
Writing:	1- Aramithris/28	2- Tawnee/12	3- Aredhel/11

Most orders awarded in the modern era (circa 1986-1988) for art and science:

Dragons:	Gwynne- 24	Ariona- 13	Tawnee- 10	Nithanalorn- 10	Joella- 9
Owls:	M'Deth- 9	Aredhel- 5	Esuom- 3	Aramithris- 3	Ozy- 3
Garber:	Gwynne- 27	Ariona- 18	Joella- 13	Tawnee- 8	Shylarra- 7

Knights of the Sword (combat)

Key:

warriors- orders of the warrior

W.M.- highest overall placing at the bi-annual weaponmaster tournament (tournament success):

E- total number of tournies entered

1,2,3- total 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place tourney finishes

events- total war events won (tournies, quests, special scenarios, etc.)

Dueling- won and lost record in dueling

A- warlords

B- knights of the sword

C- aspirants

	<u>warriors</u>	<u>W.M.</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>events</u>	<u>Dueling</u>
A Aramithris	18	1st	10	8	2	0	40	97-16
M'Deth	16	1st	19	6	4	3	28	165-53
Morluk	15	1st	14	4	3	0	19	111-47
Nashomi	15	1st	4	2	1	0	21	37-10
Aredhel	14	1st	19	6	4	1	19	118-45
B Gilos	9	3rd	20	2	1	5	13	123-103
Rift	9	---	16	0	3	3	6	33-42
Zyax	8	2nd	24	3	7	2	8	113-68
Larce	8	3rd	13	1	2	4	2	38-19
C Ryah	8	---	16	1	3	2	3	48-46
Grymlac	7	---	8	2	0	1	5	25-22
Kurse	6	3rd	15	1	2	4	5	58-36
Andre	6	---	15	1	3	1	4	62-36
Xevious	6	---	11	1	0	1	5	27-25
Hellspawn	5	---	20	1	1	1	1	38-52
Theo	4	---	14	0	2	1	3	48-30

Conclusions:

Warlords- distinct from all the others in 5 ways: 1) each as won a weaponmaster tourney, 2) each has placed in over half of the tournies he has entered (and won at least a 3rd of those he entered), 3) all are in the vicinity of 20 (or more) war events won, 4) these are the only 5 whom have won more than twice as many duels as they have lost, and 5) all 5 have also won a plunder tourney and either a Crown/champion/or defender tourney.

Knights- 75% have placed at weaponmaster. 75% have won more events than anyone else besides the warlords. All have been either a champion, defender, or guard captain.

Breakdown of tourney results (as per the system in the cultural section):

Single sword:	1- M'Deth/38	2- Gilos/15	3- Aramithris/14
two-handed:	1- M'Deth/13	2- Morluk/10	3- Aredhel/6
open class:	1- Aramithris/12	2- Aredhel/11	3- Zyax/9
spear:	1- Zyax/6	2- Gilos/5	3- Mordn/4
morningstar:	1- Aredhel/9	2- Morluk/9	3- Aramithris/6
sword & parry:	1- Aredhel/16	2- Aramithris/13	3- Morluk/13
archery:	1- Nashomi/8	2- Sterling/6	3- Naes/5
warskills:	1- Nashomi/14	2- Aredhel/11	3- Morluk/6
2 man teams:	1- Aramithris/20	2- M'Deth/19	3- Aredhel/14

Most orders awarded in the modern era (circa 1986-1988) for combat:

Warriors:	Aramithris-8	Aredhel-7	Larce-7	Grymlac-7	Andre-6
Griffons:	Hellspawn-2	Aredhel-2	Theo-1	Grymlac-1	Larce-1

Knights of the Flame (service)

Key:

orders- most pertinent to knighthood

court- number of times as monarch, consort, champion, prime minister, scribe

G.M.- number of guildmaster positions held

(major sponsor):

tourney, feast, quest, publication- an "x" in a column indicates sponsorship, organization, and running of a major (entire day) event or project in the listed area.

A- knights of the flame

B- masters of service orders

C- aspirants

	<u>orders</u>	<u>court</u>	<u>G.M.</u>	<u>tourney</u>	<u>feast</u>	<u>quest</u>	<u>publication</u>
A Aramithris	26 rose	8	21	x	-	x	x
Tawnee	17 rose	3	9	x	x	x	x
Joella	16 rose	6	8	-	x	x	x
Nashomi	13 rose	4	5	x	-	x	x
Gwynne	12 rose	2	4	-	x	-	x
Gilos	11 rose	2	9	x	-	x	x
Theo	9 rose	2	7	-	x	x	-
Ryah	8 rose	2	4	x	x	x	x
B Scarhart	11 rose	1	8	-	-	-	-
C Ghee	8 rose	0	2	-	-	x	-
Ariona	7 rose	1	2	-	x	-	x
Abedon	6 rose	2	1	-	x	-	x
M'Deth	6 rose	3	7	-	-	x	-
Aredhel	5 rose	3	5	-	-	-	-
Kalibria	5 rose	4	1	-	x	-	-
Esuom	4 rose	1	1	-	x	-	-
Ahira	3 rose	1	0	-	-	-	-

Conclusions: knights here are unique in that they are the only members whom have achieved all four of the following- 1) in 2 or more courts, 2) awarded 8 or more roses, 3) been a guildmaster 4 or more times, and 4) sponsored an event in 2 or more separate categories

Most orders awarded in the modern era (circa 1986-1988) for service:

Roses: Aramithris- 17 Gwynne- 9 Ariona- 6 Theo- 6 Ryah- 6
Lions: Aramithris- 2 Gwynne- 2 Ariona- 2 Theo- 2 Ryah- 2

Categories gleaned to make comparisons are not quite 100% exhaustive, but they are definitive. Individuals not listed can retrieve their records from the prime minister and make their own comparisons. Those in disagreement probably can't be consoled or reasoned with with any degree of success. Neither the figures nor the records lie. To be blunt, there is no evidence to support the claims of all those would be knights and warlords. The corpora seems to work, and honors appear to be fairly apportioned. The information in this article is up to date through August, 1988, though it should serve in the future to help individuals and groups ascertain those attributes that merit the elevation to knighthood.